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THE RURAL SCHOOL AND THE COMMUNITY

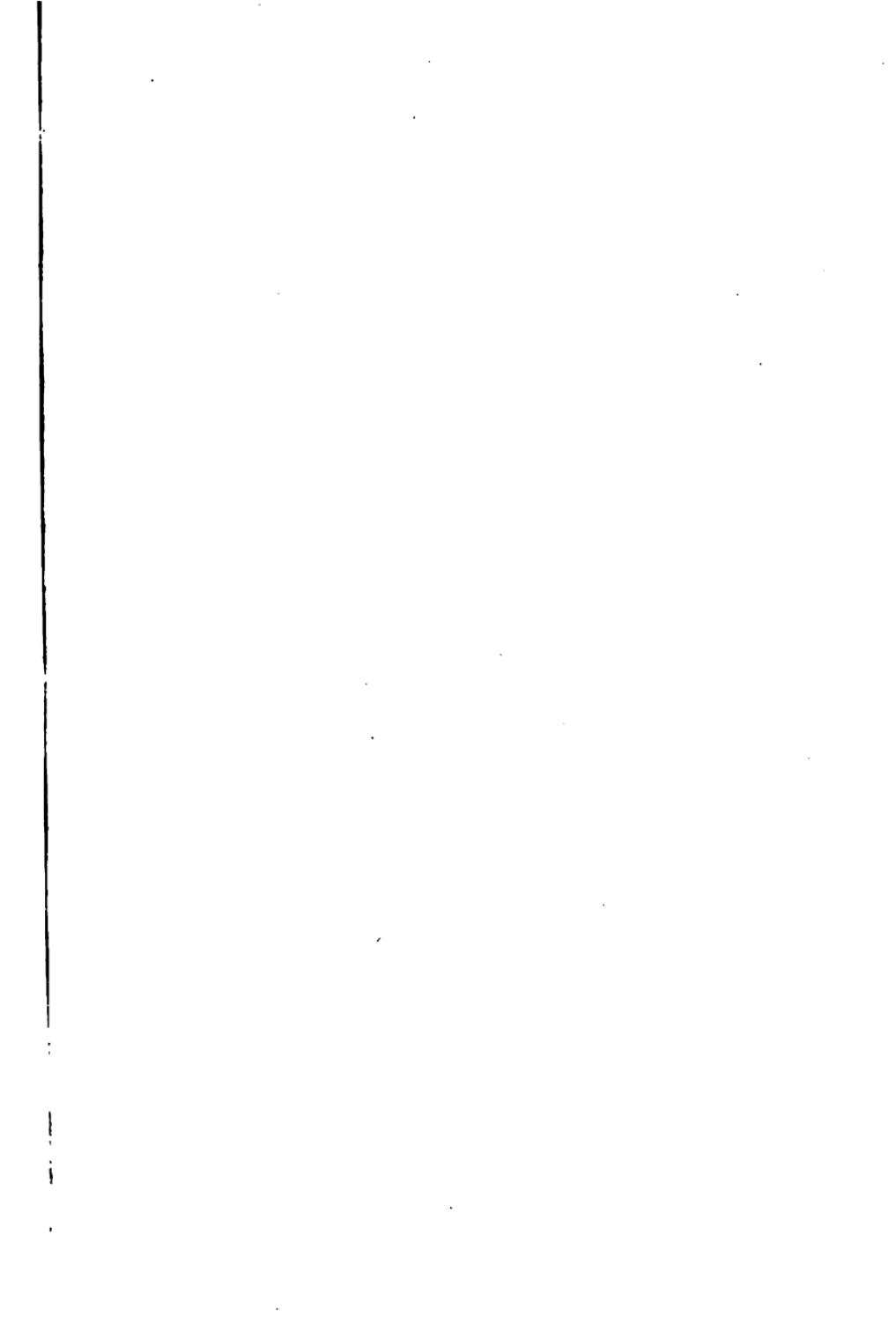
HOWARD F. LEWIS

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THE RURAL SCHOOL AND THE COMMUNITY

A STUDY OF THE METHODS AND
APPLICATION OF THE SOCIAL SURVEY

BY

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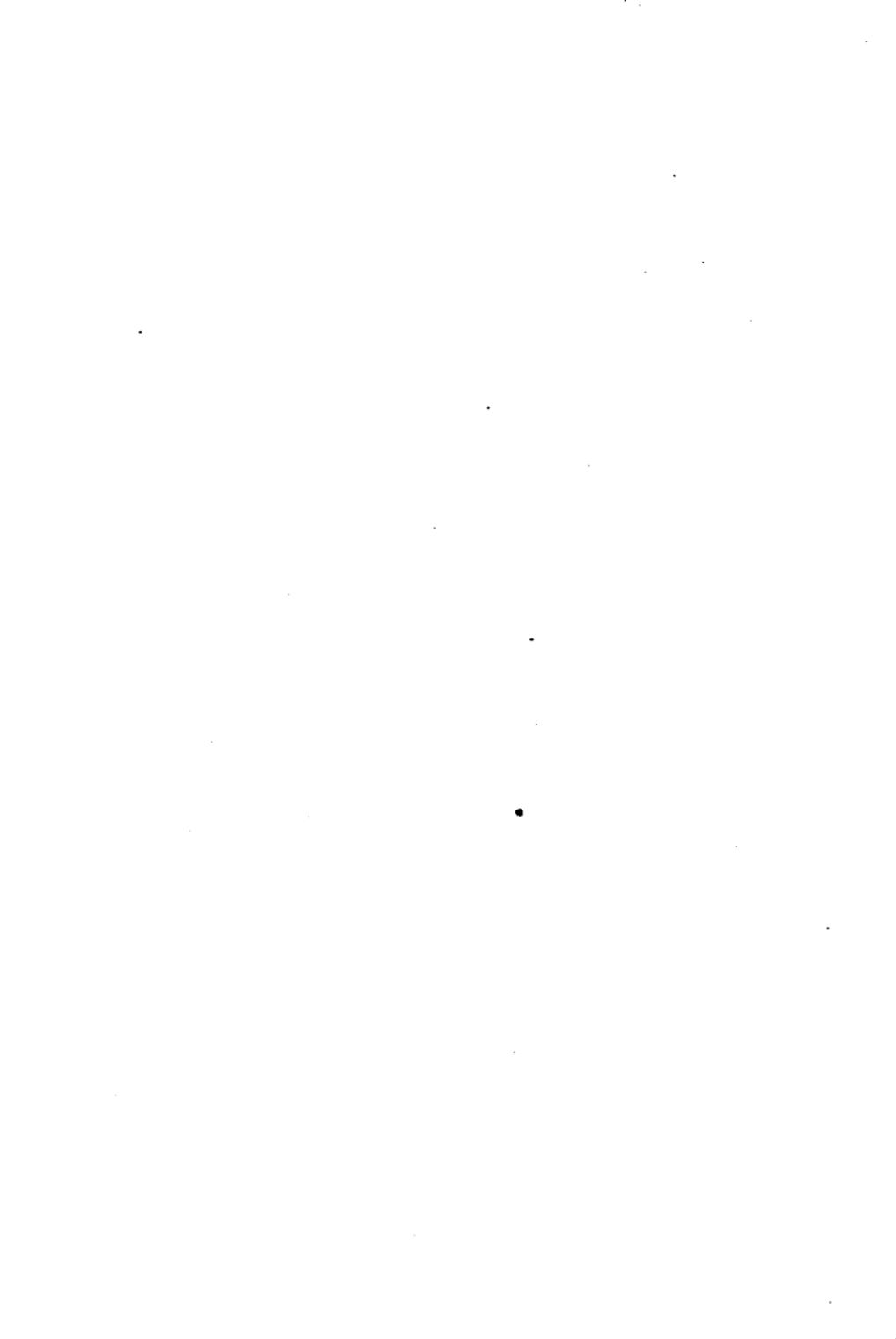
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DEDICATED
TO MY MOTHER
AND
TO MY WIFE



PREFACE

WITHIN the past few years, particularly, there has been a tremendous amount of material written upon the rural problem. It is well that it should be so, for the field has been so largely neglected that many people do not know that there is a rural problem; and even now men are by no means agreed as to the fundamental issue in that intricate and complex situation. It would seem, however, that for the present generation the question is an economic one, and particularly one of accounting and marketing; that for the future generation it will be a question of education, using the word in the somewhat restricted sense.

In studying the question, therefore, it is well that we should remember that a concrete application of sociological principles is never out of place. The difficulty is that we are prone to apply them in a hasty and vague manner, without first finding the actual facts involved. It is the old, old story of *thinking* we know, when as a matter of fact we know little about the situation, and what we do know we have in a most unsatisfactory form.

The object of the present study is to indicate a way in which we may ascertain these things, and, further, to suggest some uses to which these facts may be put. This book is not to be looked upon as a full and complete study of social surveying. It is intended merely to be suggestive of what may be done in rural education if teachers have patience and the proper training.

That the book may furnish material for thought,

therefore, is all that the author hopes to accomplish. If it lead to definite action and to a better correlation between school and community, he will then be satisfied indeed.

The author wishes to acknowledge the kindness of the Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church for permission to use a number of diagrams printed as a part of the Ohio Rural Life Survey reports, especially in "Church Growth and Decline in Ohio"; and also the kindness of the "Educational Review" for permission to use parts of an article by the present writer entitled, "The Social Survey in Rural Education," which appeared in that magazine in October, 1914. Free use has also been made of a number of bulletins of the Bureau of Education.

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THE RURAL SCHOOL AND THE COMMUNITY

“All knowledge is lost that ends in the knowing.”
—*John Ruskin.*

THE RURAL SCHOOL AND THE COMMUNITY

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

IT may seem trite and common-place to say that facts are fundamental in dealing with questions of public policy. Yet the truth is that too many people are either unused to or incapable of forming judgment with reference to public questions that are based upon facts. In matters of scientific research the fact is the one thing sought at all hazards. All mechanical arts rest upon certain facts which, if recognized, bring industrial efficiency; denied, bring ruin and disaster upon those who ignore them. A group of men acting as the directors of a business concern will insist upon having all of the facts as to markets, cost of production, and the like before they will even attempt to lay down a financial policy or outline a business campaign.

Yet strange as it may seem, these same men, dealing with matters of a social character, seem willing to rest their judgment upon rumor, guess-work, and even prejudice. They seem willing to believe demagogic statement as though it were the voice of God. They argue on the side they want to believe, nor stop to seek the facts on the other side. They read newspapers that tell them the things they want to be told. They

listen to speakers who tell them the things they already believe in. One may take almost any great public issue which has been before the people of late years as an example. The writer is urging neither the wisdom nor the justice of woman suffrage, prohibition, nor the LaFollette Seamen's law when he submits that the judgment of the greater number of people with reference to them is not the outcome of sober reasoning, indulged in after a search for the facts. Yet under a form of government such as ours these questions have to be settled by the people, either indirectly through the selection of representatives, or directly through the initiative and referendum. Facts available to every one are neither sought nor demanded, and men accept the arguments of others as their own reasoning, and their conclusions as of their own mental activity. Leaders reason and debate, while the mass of the electorate delude themselves with the thought that the results are of their own making. In one sense this is true, but not in the sense which they think.

If in scientific questions, in industrial questions, in financial questions, facts are absolutely essential, it would seem little less than criminal that questions of social well-being should be settled by guess-work and prejudice.

Nowhere is this general principle—that all public policies should rest upon all available facts—more applicable in education. Fortunately within recent years this has come to be more and more recognized. The development of experimental psychology and the concrete application of the findings in this great field is but one illustration. A more pertinent one for our purpose, in some respects, is the attempt to adjust the school to the actual world through the introduction of the industrial arts. It is felt that such a policy

reduces the school mortality, that it better fits the child for the struggle he is later to engage in, and that the educational process itself becomes easier when concepts are developed through concrete things.

This little book deals especially with this phase of the question—that of the adaptation of the school to the community and of the use of the school by the community. More particularly, it has to do with this great work in education in so far as it touches the rural communities. In truth, "Facts in Rural Life—Their Determination and Utilization" might easily have served as a title for the present study.

Now the rural problem of to-day is a three-fold one—technical, economic, and social. The technical has to do with such things as drainage and irrigation, fertilization, feeds and feeding, farm machinery; the economic has to do with buying and selling, marketing processes, rural credit; the social deals with educational, cultural, and religious questions, including schools, religious organizations, lodges, amusements, questions of population, pathological conditions, and the like.

Of these three themes, it may be said with a good deal of truth that, though oftentimes neglected, the value, need, and place of the purely technical questions have been receiving in times past the bulk of the attention by men whose influence counts most. And within more recent times—and especially since the outbreak of the European war—men have devoted a very large amount of attention to the purely economic phase (as defined above) of rural life. Agricultural colleges, agricultural instruction in the secondary schools, university extension work, government bulletins, and numerous other agencies open to the utilization of the public, are doing all within their power to arouse the farmers to

a just appreciation of the need of conservation and proper direction of our economic forces. And those in whose interest these things are being done are responding well indeed. True, many farmers fail to understand and to be reached, but at least one may say that more of them are awake to this aspect of the problem than ever before, and that those who will not be aroused are more than likely, under the increasing strain of competition, to find themselves outdistanced in the race. Yet, while all this is appreciated to the fullest extent, the economic fact remains that so far as from one-half to three-fourths of our farmers are concerned, agriculture as a business proposition is a business failure, if due allowance is made for interest on the invested capital, and the labor time of the farmer himself.

This is not the place to discuss the rural problem in all of its manifold aspects. Fundamentally, as H. W. Wiley says, it is a matter of making farming pay as large or larger profits than urban pursuits.¹

In view of the *technical* advance, therefore, the proposition resolves itself increasingly into an economic one. Nor is this of necessity inconsistent with Professor Gillette's view that the difficulty is primarily one of the point of view.² The essence of the whole matter is that the farmer has not taught himself to look upon farming as a business proposition in the same light as the manufacturer or merchant looks upon his business. The farmer has too largely failed to look beyond the mere matter of productivity itself, and has neglected the equally important questions of credit and marketing.³

¹ Century Magazine, 83:623.

² See Annals of the American Academy, March, 1912.

³ Proof of this statement is abundant, but it cannot be discussed here. See Effingham, Illinois, *Democrat*, May 18, 1916.

In fact, until the farmer can learn to look over his own fence to the world outside; until he can come to see that farming is a business, with all of the dignity, responsibilities, and importance of other businesses; until he can see that farming calls for just as intense a concentration of thought and energy, as great a study of conditions, as rigid a training; until he can be shown the competition with which he has to meet is just as keen as in other lines of human endeavor, he must continue to occupy an inferior position.⁴

It is not, however, with this aspect of the rural problem that we are here primarily concerned. Technical processes and business problems lie beyond the scope of this book. In fact, there are many who contend that the economic aspect is not the fundamental weakness; who argue that the problem of education is more significant as a line of endeavor. The Country Life Commission appointed by President Roosevelt said (p. 52) that "The schools are held to be largely responsible for ineffective farming, low ideals, and the drift to town." Bailey, for instance, calls the school the "Fundamental Problem."⁵ Whether or not this is so, it is at least true that it is equally important. After all, it would seem to be a matter of whether the emphasis should be on the present or the future generation. As a matter of fact, there would seem to be no reason why either should be neglected.

Nowhere is the essential unity of human problems more clearly shown than just here, where, if anywhere, the questions involved are mutually interdependent.

⁴ Compare Powell Cooperation in Agriculture, p. 14. The position assumed by the present writer is by no means antagonistic to that of Mr. Powell. As Mr. Powell himself suggests, however, the above constitutes a pre-requisite to permanent betterment of any other type.

⁵ See his Country Life Movement, pp. 61 ff.

Thus, if economic advance is dependent upon education, so is the successful school dependent upon a satisfactory income. The whole matter is apt to run in a vicious circle—low incomes, poor schools, unsatisfactory instruction, lack of inspiration and training, and thence back to low incomes. In too many instances the only alternative for the young man or woman in the country, who earnestly desires better things, is an urban education. The farmer too often either will not or cannot—the result has usually been the same in either case—contribute adequately to his school system.

So, after all, in a very real sense, Bailey is right, for there is no means other than through educational effort of some kind, that “better farming” can come to be a reality; and until a community can get its adults together for a discussion of common problems, and can train its children to appreciate the situation in its true light, permanent uplift of a general character cannot be hoped for. And in this systematic development, no one can occupy a more significant position than the teacher, if he but try. Not that a teacher needs to be an agricultural expert—far from it—but he can provide “the motive power.”

Mention has already been made of the fact that there is not place where the unity of social life is more real than in the rural community. Such being the case, it would seem to be in accord with the best interests of all concerned to have some kind of a clearing-house for all of the activities of the community. At the present time the function performed by such an institution is too little emphasized. The State and Federal governments furnish a large mass of material on the technique of farming, but much of it is purely technical, and most of it demands local application and adaptation. Clean

recreation and social functions are furnished by various unrelated agencies and hence are too often unsuccessful. The educational work itself is often hampered by criticism from a good many people not sympathetically acquainted with the actual facts of the case or with the object sought by the teacher. The whole situation is one that calls for some kind of a unifying agency. These problems remain unsolved—or only partially solved—because no single agency is provided whose function it is to get the facts of the situation, to present them in the proper perspective, and to get the citizens of the community together for a common discussion of them. From the point of view of the teacher, this is unfortunate for several reasons, primarily because he and the people in whose ultimate interests he is laboring are both working in the dark, but also because the immediate technical work of the school lacks adaptability.

Unfortunately, though constantly emphasized in the abstract, too few rural workers are willing to suggest concrete lines of procedure. Perhaps, in part, this is a scholastic weakness—a failure of the Normal school. Be that as it may, the fact remains that the average teacher feels hopelessly at sea, knowing neither where to begin nor how to proceed. In the city this inability on the part of the teacher is not so significant, since there are any number of other agencies willing and able to take up the task, and many strong men and women capable of leading. Neither of these things are as true of the open country. There are too often no trained and efficient leaders, and the only agency (outside of the school) is apt to be the church. The church is always at a disadvantage in this respect, for once let it undertake the task and it is accused of proselytizing. Moreover, the competition

between rural churches is usually most keen, and cooperation almost out of the question, even assuming that the ministers are capable of taking the initiative in rural regeneration—an assumption too often not in accord with the facts. The teacher, on the other hand, is a community employee, paid out of the general taxes. He is a "community character," and presumed to be enlightened, broad-minded, and an aggressive leader. These are but some of the reasons why the teacher may well be the impelling factor.

With the theory of the situation as thus outlined, there cannot be a great deal of disagreement. The fact of the rural problem, the need of attacking it in a scientific manner, and the need of a propelling and directing force, do not admit serious adverse criticism. But, granting so much, the greater problem still confronts us, namely, how is the work to be done? Is this general accumulation of facts a part of the teacher's function? Has he the time and the means for the performance of it? What shall he do with the bare facts after they are once in his possession? These are questions less easily answered. Yet an answer is imperative, for if this be not the proper agency, people should know it and look elsewhere. Not that the same agency need be employed everywhere—this is a matter to be determined by local circumstances, but is it *generally* true? In any case, the teacher must be a part of the movement, and this part demands consideration, at least.

It is to an analysis of this question that this little work is devoted.

CHAPTER II

THE FUNCTION OF THE SURVEY

"In order to arrive at all the significant facts upon which an adequate constructive program may be based, the active co-operation of all is necessary."

THREE has been within the past few years much laudable effort made to get at the facts involved in questions of dispute. This tendency is far from being confined to any one phase of the rural problem and far less has it been restricted to this field alone. In broader matters of public policy, surveys and investigations seem at last to have come into their own. Men, in times past, have been too willing to follow the old rule of "nine-tenths guess and one-tenth knowledge." Fortunately, society is insisting more and more upon nine-tenths knowledge and one-tenth estimate.

There is scarcely a field of human endeavor in which this tendency has not appeared. The census itself has long been illustrative of the desire to gain facts, but it never has been so scientifically organized nor so extensively used as it is to-day; and further reforms are promised. In fact, so much data is collected by the enumerators that its publication is thereby delayed so long as to rob it of at least a part of its value. In legislative matters, too, there has never been a time when so many committees have been appointed for the investigation of subjects of public concern. Scarcely a law is enacted dealing with any subject, that is not

based upon extensive research. The work of the National Monetary Commission and of the Tariff Commission occur to one at once in this connection. The whole field of efficiency engineering is based upon this modern tendency.¹ Time was when men *guessed* at the proper speed of a metal lathe; to-day, a slide-rule is utilized and waste is eliminated. Twenty-five years ago, if a telephone company wished to establish a branch exchange, its promoters built where they *thought* the city was going to expand; now a careful study of the movement of local population is made, and statistics thus compiled form the basis for a scientific judgment. Once, men about to lease a building in the business section of the city located on the corner where they *thought* the traffic was the heaviest; to-day an accurate count is made of the passing pedestrians for a week at a time, and they *know* where trade is the briskest.

If this has been true in business and in industrial pursuits, it is scarcely less true in social matters. As Professor Gillette has pointed out, the work of Charles Booth in London, published in his "Life and Labor of the People of London," may well be called the beginning of the modern survey. City life of the present day is so complicated, there are so many currents and cross-currents to be reckoned with that no constructive reform can well be undertaken without first securing adequate and accurate data. Success may come without this, but it will come blindly and largely by accident. The comprehensive surveys at Buffalo, Pittsburgh, and Cleveland are the best known examples of this activity. Whether it be for housing reform, the elimination of disease, or the construction of a

¹ See an article by the author in *Popular Science Monthly*, Jan. 1918, "Problem of Efficiency of Labor," especially p. 157 ff.

public utility, the need of adequate facts is equally great. Where human welfare is at stake, men cannot well afford to guess at solutions.

That the problem is of a different character does not mean that the need is any less in the work of rural reconstruction. Yet here, as is so apt to be the case, the new tendency was late in making itself felt. There are a number of reasons for this. In part it was due to the fact that the problem was less apparent, and thought to be less complex. Moreover, the city is a more compact whole with definite boundaries. But rural life surveys are fast becoming recognized as a necessary prerequisite for social advance in the country as truly as in the city.² Up to the present time these have been confined to special lines of work, particularly religious and educational. True, surveys of a general nature have been made of particular communities, but they have been few and unrelated. On the other hand, the work of President Roosevelt's Country Life Commission, though extremely valuable, was too broad to be more than merely suggestive.

As has been indicated, almost the only surveys of

²A recent writer in the *American Journal of Sociology* (vol. 17, p. 647ff.) has suggested the following reasons for making a survey of rural and small communities, among others:—(1) all social problems are inter-related problems, and need to be studied as such. Educational problems, for instance, cannot be satisfactorily dealt with if other phases of community life are neglected. (2) In a small community, a large force of trained workers is not needed. There are plenty of problems to be dealt with, but the getting of the facts regarding them is not overly difficult. (3) Every community is different from every other community, which emphasizes the need at the same time that it maintains interest. (4) A present-day consideration of the situation would prevent many evils from arising in the future. (5) The small community is more typical of American life than the large one. (6) Intimate acquaintanceship on the part of the workers leads to more accurate results than are possible in larger undertakings.

The Dark Cloud of Commercialism

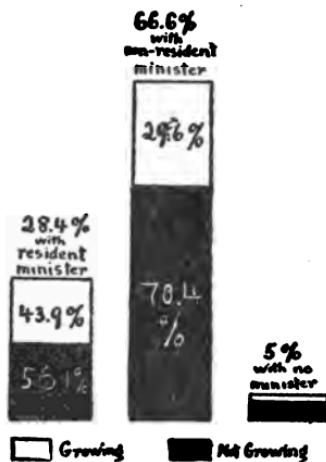
Of 598 church socials

held during a year

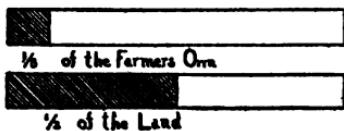


are money-making events

Should the church buy its support?

**The Absentee Minister
and****Church Efficiency**
288 churches

LAND MONOPOLY



Rural Church Decline in Northwestern Ohio

of 300
village
churches



47%

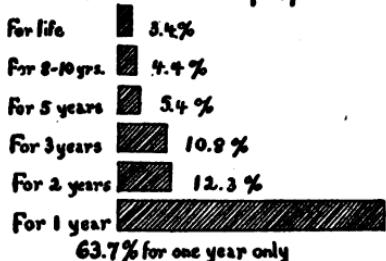
of 149
open-country
churches



72%

are not Growing

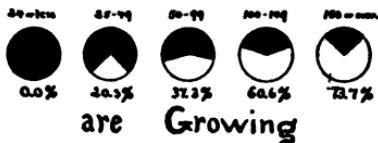
The Make-shift School Teacher Certificates held by 204 rural school teachers in 1911-1912



NEED FOR FEDERATION

The Way of Salvation for Small Churches

Of churches with a membership of :-



are Growing

CONSOLIDATION NEEDED

Of the rural schools

87% have 20-30 recitations per day

Decrease in Improved Farm Lands

1011,306 acres in 1900

935,033 acres in 1910

7.6% decrease

Land Becoming a Luxury

In 1900 \$38.54 per acre

In 1910 \$72.41 per acre

86.8% increase

rural conditions that have been made, have been with a particular end in view. They have largely been either religious or educational. Of the two, it can scarcely be gainsaid, as a general thing, that the more effective of the two has been the religious survey, and this for the reason that those in charge of the work have seen the necessity of correlating the church survey with one of the community—a thing which most educational surveyors have failed to do.

A good illustration of this contrast—perhaps the best one—may be found in the state of Ohio. Two comprehensive surveys have been made of this state within the past few years, one by the Ohio Rural Life Commission and one by the State Department of Public Instruction. The central thought of this chapter is so clearly portrayed by these two pieces of work that a little attention paid to them will be well worth while.

The Ohio Rural Life Survey was directed by the Department of Church and Country Life of the Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church.⁸ Though some additional territory was covered during the summer of 1913, the territory covered in 1912 was sufficiently broad to make the results of value, and the method did not differ essentially from that followed during the succeeding summer. During 1912 twenty-one truly representative counties of the state were covered. The accompanying charts (See pages 22, 23, and 24) indicate the results sufficiently for our present purpose, and at the same time suggest an attractive form in which to place the data before the people.

From our present point of view, however, the thing in which we are interested is not so much the results as the plan. The essential thing to note is, that

⁸ Address 156 Fifth Ave., New York City. The work was under the immediate direction of Dr. Warren H. Wilson.

VILLAGE COMMUNITY¹

1. Public Library or Reading Room.
 - a. Number of volumes? Proportion fiction?
 - b. Number of members in village? In country?
 - c. What cooperation with village schools?
..... Country schools?
 - d. Average daily attendance of girls (under 15)?
(boys under 15)? women (15-30)?
men (15-30)? women (30 and over)?
..... men (30 and over)?
 - e. Date as to circulation, 1911-1912:
 - (1) Fiction?
 - (2) Other?
2. What Local Health Ordinances exist?
How well enforced?
3. Describe fully village lockup Are tramps housed free of charge? How many, June 1, 1912—May 31, 1913?
What cases before Mayor or Justice of Peace same period?
4. Get list of girls who need vocational training.
5. Get list of girls who have left school.
6. Who are the girl leaders in this community?
(Give reasons for each selection)

¹One of a number of blanks covering this topic.

though the survey was intended primarily for furnishing data upon which to judge the church, it was by no means confined to a study of the church plant and equipment. In fact, were one to guess the object of the work from the various kinds of data collected, one would sometimes be at a loss to know what the central theme might be. For information was collected, checked, tabulated, and presented in attractive form upon farm incomes; retired farmers; moving-picture shows; the life, habits, and tastes of country girls; the conditions of the community as to libraries, health ordinances, the village lock-up, etc.; topography,

STUDY OF MOTION PICTURE SHOWS

Name of village? Population? No. M. P. places?
Name of theatre? Owned by local interest? Outside interest?
..... Admission cents. Times per week open? Seating
capacity? Total admission per week? Average admission per
afternoon? Evening? Proportion of audience under 16?
Proportion of audience from country? Ventilation of hall? Adequate
exits? Appearance of hall neat?
.....
.....
Subject of film? Maker? General Film
Co.? Independent? General Character: Geographical?
Current Events? Historical? Drama-Comedy? Farce?
..... Tragedy? Melodrama? Other forms of drama?
Artistic merits: Clear picture? Scenic effects? Good acting?
..... Educational value: Indicate
Points of moral value?
Immoral qualities?
Describe the general effect of the film (summarize the plot if necessary). Is it moral?
..... Immoral? Insipid?
Remarks
.....
..... Investigator Date

natural wealth, and kinds of farming; shifting of population; as well as special information bearing on Sunday Schools, church equipment, and the minister. The accompanying sample blanks give some idea of the breadth of the undertaking.

Let us compare with this the survey made by the state itself in regard to its educational system. The work was done in 1913, and as a study of the schools themselves, as isolated factors, the survey was one of the most thorough and painstaking ever undertaken. Those acquainted with the details of that survey will testify to the fact that the questions asked were lacking neither in completeness nor in definiteness. They

Family name?	Church, Circuitus or	County	Township
P. O.?	Occupation?	Live in town?	
Country?	Location on road or street?	Farm owner?	Farm rented?
Years in present home?	If a farmer, do you take an Agricultural paper?	A religious paper?	How long has it been since any Minister last visited you?

1 Name of each person?
 2 Age (approximate if over 20 yrs.)?
 3 Position in family (h., w., s., or d.)?
 4 If church member, what denomination?
 5 Member of what church?
 6 Church preference, if not a member?
 7 Times attended any church in last four (4) weeks?
 8 Member of what Sunday School?
 9 Times attended Sunday School in last four (4) weeks?
 10 If not a member of S. S., at what age did you quit?
 11 In what branches of church work are you active?
 12 How many socials have you attended in last four (4) weeks?
 13 How many of these did the church provide?
 14 What games do you like?
 15 Which of these does the church provide?
 16 Member of what lodge?
 17 Times attended in last four (4) weeks?
 18 If gone to the city, what doing there?
 19 Finished what year or grade in common school, H. S., College?

Instructions for the use of blanks: If more than five children, use an extra blank. Questions marked with an asterisk (*) are quite personal and should be asked with tact, sometimes not at all. These blanks are to be tabulated and left with the Pastor. It is suggested that the Pastor record all Pastoral calls on the back of each blank. A map of the parish can be made from these blanks, locating each house, indicating whether church members or not, using different colors for each denomination, and black if non-members. As the non-members are received into some church the colors are changed.

A FARMER

PHYSICAL PLANT—WHOLE BUILDING

CARD I.

DATE	COUNTY	TOWN	DISTRICT	SCHOOL	PRINCIPAL			
A. GROUNDS.				B. BUILDINGS.				
1. Dimensions in feet		X		1. Heated by—St. J. St., Fu., In. S'm., D. S.'m.				
2. Area in square feet.				2. Ventilated by—W., Gr., Pl. F'n., Ex. F'n.				
3. Play area, square feet.				3. Does the janitor understand the h. & v. system?				
4. Organized play area, square feet.				4. Are the intakes and outlets open? Yes. No.				
5. School garden area, square feet.				5. Humidified by				
6. Ornamentation.	G. F. P.			6. Are there earth privies?	Yes.	No.		
7. Natural beauty of site.	G. F. P.			7. Are privies apart of B's and G's privies in Feet.				
8. Nature of soil.	C. L. S.			8. Are there earth privies?	Yes.	No.		
9. Playground apparatus.	C.			9. Are privies apart of B's and G's privies in Feet.				
A.								
B.								
C.								
D.								
(Note. Underscore any homemade apparatus)					b. Distance of privies from bldg.			
14. Age of building in years.					c. Privy screenins.	A. G. F. P.		
15. No. of class rooms.					d. Urinals.	A. G. F. P.		
16. Are there separate cloak rooms for the sexes?					e. Are privies clean?	Yes.	No.	
17. How are the cloak rooms heated and ventilated?					f. Are there water closets?	Yes.	No.	
18. If no cloak rooms where are clothes hung?					g. In basement.	b. On first floor.		
19. No. of closets.					c. Individual—Pull flush, automatic flush.			
20. Area of closets.					d. In ranges—Automatic flush.			
21. Area of corridors.					e. Can toilet floors be flushed?	Yes.	No.	
22. Is the building in good repair?	Yes.	No.			f. Are toilet floors flushed?	Yes.	No.	
23. Repairs needed.					g. What disinfectant is used?			
A.					h. Do pupils have individual towels? Yes. No.			
B.					i. What Kind?			
24. Material of building.					j. Do the pupils have individual soap?	Yes.	No.	
25. Area of entry in sq. ft.								

C. LIBRARY.

D. GENERAL EQUIPMENT.

E. SANITARY EQUIPMENT.

F. COOKING EQUIPMENT.

G. MICROSCOPE.

H. SANITARY DRINKING FOUNTAINS.

I. INDIVIDUAL CUPS.

J. DUSTPROOF CABINET FOR CUPS.

E. SANITATION AND HYGIENE.

1. How often are the floors oiled per	?	20. How often does teacher or principal inspect the sanitaries or privies per	?
2. How often are the floors scrubbed per	?	21. How often is this done by any other officer per	?
3. How often are the floors swept per	?	22. Who is this officer?	
4. How often are the class rooms dusted per	?	23. Has the school medical inspection?	Yes, No.
5. How often is the whole building dusted per	?	24. Is medical inspection confined to preventing of contagious diseases?	Yes, No.
6. Who does the sweeping and dusting?		25. Is there a school nurse?	Yes, No.
7. If the teacher how much is she paid for it?		26. Is each child examined each year for sight and hearing?	Yes, No.
8. Is a sweeping mixture used?	Yes, No.	27. Who does it?	
9. Is a feather duster used in dusting?	Yes, No.	28. What proportion of pupils receive thorough physical examination?	
10. Is a yarn duster used in dusting?	Yes, No.	29. Does district provide free text books?	Yes, No.
11. Is a dry cloth used in dusting?	Yes, No.	30. In what condition are these as to cleanliness?	G., F., P.
12. Is a damp cloth used in dusting?	Yes, No.	31. Is there supervised organized play outdoors	Yes, No.
13. Is a treated cloth used in dusting?	Yes, No.	32. Who supervises?	
14. How often are sanitaries, or privies scrubbed per	?	33. Is there a baseball diamond?	Yes, No.
15. How often are privies cleaned out underneath per	?	34. Is there a well on the premises?	Yes, No.
16. Is urine allowed to soak into the ground?	Yes, No.	35. Is the water supply known to be safe?	Yes, No.
17. If not how is it taken care of?		36. Has the water supply ever been contaminated?	Yes, No.
18. How often are the grounds cleaned up each year?		37. Are the floors hard pine, hardwood, in G., F., P. condition?	Yes, No.
19. Who cleans them up?		38. Is the foundation tight?	Yes, No.

covered every phase of the question, from the size of the grounds and the material of the building itself, to the nature of the towels used. A total of over 240 questions were asked on one set of blanks alone.⁴

If one were to ask the purpose of this wide survey, the answer would be at once,—to gain increased efficiency. As the director of the survey put it: "This survey affects directly and immediately the welfare of 900,000 children, the efficient expenditure of \$30,000,000 annually, and the operation to the best advantage of a \$75,000,000 plant." Now, increased efficiency, though it may seem trite to say it, is largely a matter of adjustment. So many times has the question of readjustment been raised in teachers' conventions and elsewhere that the mere mention of the word is sufficient to provoke a smile. Yet withal, we can scarcely give it too much attention, *if we mean by it the proper thing*. The real difficulty is that too many times we have either proceeded blindly to "adjust something," and naturally enough we have blundered, or we have contented ourselves with mere talking about the value of adjustment. To illustrate, Ohio has, as has already been suggested, made a state-wide survey. The object professed is that we may know in what condition the schools really are, not what our belief concerning them is, not what we think they are, but what actually exists,—and to the end that they may be better adjusted to the needs of the various communities, made more uniform in quality, and rendered generally more efficient. This work has been well done, and its value is tremendous, *if it is used in the right way*. But note that it has little or no value in and of itself, aside from a consideration of mere interest. As

⁴ Note the character of the data called for in the illustrative blank.

Ruskin says, "All knowledge is lost that ends in the knowing," and it would be of no value at all, from the viewpoint of reconstruction, to know that 14.5% of the rural schools in Worcester county, Massachusetts, are one hundred years old or over. Nor does it aid *in and of itself* to know that "65% of the schools were found to have no adjustable school furniture, floors were seldom scrubbed or oiled, few opportunities were offered pupils to heat anything for the mid-day lunch, and in few cases were there any special apparatus for ventilation."⁵ If, therefore, this information is used to accomplish nothing more than the mere dropping from the curriculum certain courses and the introduction of certain others; if we consider that we have done our duty if we introduce hygiene, nature study, and domestic science, taught *everywhere in the same way* from the same texts, splendid though these may be; if the examination of a school building leads merely to the construction of a better building; the result will at least be a failure to accomplish all that might be achieved by this expenditure of effort. For, note that the end of education is not the curriculum, but the people of *this and the coming generation*; and if we limit our attention, as we are so apt to do in our investigations, to the school-house, we commit an unpardonable error.

An illustration may make the point more clear. "I dare say," said Frederick W. Taylor before the Tuck School Conference on Scientific Management, "that you think there is no science in shoveling dirt. . . . There is, however, a best way of doing everything. . . . The workers of the Bethlehem Steel Company, for instance,

⁵This is not offered as a criticism of the work of Dr. Aspinwall, of the State Normal School at Worcester, who realizes as fully as any one the value of a correlation between school and community.

almost all owned their own shovels, and I have seen them go day after day to the same shovel for every kind of work, from shoveling rice coal, three and one-half pounds to the shovel load, to shoveling heavy wet ore, thirty-eight pounds to the shovel-load. Is three and one-half pounds right or is thirty-eight pounds right? We began by taking the maximum load on the shovel and counting shovelfuls all day long and weighing the tonnage at the end of the day. I think there was about thirty-eight pounds to the shovel. We found how much those men could do when they were shoveling at thirty-eight pounds to the shovel on the average. And then we got shorter shovels holding about thirty-four pounds, and measured the tonnage per day, and it was greater than when they were using the thirty-eight pound shovel. Again we reduced the load to thirty pounds, and they did still a greater tonnage, again to twenty-eight pounds, and another increase, and the load kept on increasing as we diminished the shovel-load until we reached about twenty-one pounds; at twenty-one pounds the man did his biggest day's work. With twenty pounds, with eighteen pounds, with seventeen, and with fourteen, they did again a smaller day's work. . . . The foundation of that part of the science of shoveling then, lies in always giving a shoveler a shovel which will hold twenty-one pounds, whatever material he is using.

“What were the consequences of that? In the Bethlehem Steel Works we had to build a shovel room for our common laborers. Up to that time the men had owned their own shovels. We had to equip this room with eight or ten kinds of shovels, so that whatever a man went at, whether rice coal on the one hand or very heavy ore on the other, he would have just a twenty-one pound load.”

The point to this illustration lies in the fact that Mr. Taylor did not stop when he had collected his data on the kind of shovel, the length of handle, and size of the scoop, the weight of a shovelful of a particular kind of ore, and the amount that an average man could shovel in a day. Nor did he blindly choose a half a dozen shovels of various sizes, and tell his men to pick the one they thought would best do the work. On the contrary, he took twenty-one pounds of each kind of material that had to be shoveled, and selected a shovel with just the right size of scoop, and finally, under the direction of one who was held responsible for this phase of the work, a particular shovel was given out each day to each individual, to correspond to the kind of ore he was to shovel. Not until this was done did Mr. Taylor consider his duty accomplished. As a matter of fact, he went even further than this, and taught the men how to use the shovels in order best to conserve their energy.

So, too, ought it be in education. The State of Ohio knows practically all that there is to know about its school situation from a purely mechanical point of view. The school is not attaining its full degree of efficiency—so much indeed is known. It has been determined how many one-room school buildings there are within the State, how much the teachers are paid, how inadequately the school plant is equipped, and all this. A high standard of efficiency has been kept in mind as an ideal throughout all this. In the terms of the illustration, we know where the shovels come from and what the ideal load is. But do we know enough about the material to be shoveled to be sure how large a scoop it is going to take in every instance to get just twenty-one pounds—no more and no less? Or are we, knowing how large the load ought to be, to guess at the

weight of the ore—to try several shovels until we think we are right? In short, what do we *know* about the *people and their life*—those for whom all this has been done?⁶ Do we know the particular circumstances and the peculiarities of each individual community to which we are asked to adjust this reconstructed school? And if not, then has not half of the problem been lost sight of?

“But,” it is urged, “we know all of this. It is perfectly obvious that we cannot adapt things when we do not know to what we are to adapt them. But we do know all about our community, we are acquainted with the parents of our children, we know what the crops are, and we know that one of our churches is not as strong as the other.”

This is well and good so far as it goes. But how many reputed successful, can answer the following list of questions, selected at random, not from the general impression only, but with a reasonable degree of accuracy?

1. Has the population of your township been increasing or diminishing within the past ten years, and by what percentage?
2. What per cent of the farmers in the locality are renters? On what terms do they rent?
3. Of the renters, how many of them are such because of the high cost of land and how many are merely using this means as a step toward ultimate ownership?

⁶ The Report of the Ohio State School Survey Commission is a voluminous book of 352 pages. It is a veritable mine of information regarding the school system of the state. Out of the twenty-two sections into which it is divided, however, but two are directly concerned with these other factors, a total of 45 pages out of the 352. Of these 45, 2 are devoted to “General Community Conditions” and 43 to “Outside Cooperation with Rural Schools.”

4. Is the racial complexion of the place changing, in what way, and how rapidly? Is the change for better or for worse?

5. Where is the local produce marketed, and at what price?

6. Are there any efforts at cooperation? Have any such attempts failed in times past, and why?

7. How many of the farmers make use of available government bulletins? How many take agricultural papers? Other papers?

8. How many churches are there in the community? How many are growing? If declining, what is the cause of their decay? How many boys and how many girls are in the Sunday Schools?

9. What is the percentage of illiteracy in the community?

10. How many of the farmers borrow money, on what security, from whom, and at what rate?

11. As to the new farmers, where do they come from, why did they leave their former places of residence, and were they ever farmers before?

12. What percentage of the people are church members? Of those who are not (a) what is the reason, (b) have they a church preference?

13. How much has the township spent on improvements within the past five years, and on what?

14. What is the tax rate this year?

15. What is the condition of any charitable or correctional institution in the township? By whom is it supported, how many inmates are there, and how is the superintendent chosen?

16. In what way does the school cooperate with the other social agencies in the community?

17. To whom do you report a case of economic distress?

18. What are the occupations of the township trustees?

19. What is the average income of the farmers in the community, and how many of them fail to get a comfortable living, using that term in its generally accepted sense?

20. Are there any crops that might be profitably introduced into the community? What is the greatest need of the soil? How does land sell, per acre?

21. Is the locality predominately Republican or Democratic? How many Socialists are there? Of what type?

22. How many qualified voters are there in the township? What percentage of them vote at any election?

Remember, it is not asked what we *think* about these things, but what we know. And we must not answer for our own community on the basis of what is true in some other locality with which we chance to be acquainted. In short, in what position are we to adjust that school, of which we know so much, to the community?

To put the question thus baldly is in itself sufficient to point the significance of the social survey to the educational forces of the state. In other lines of educational activity this has been recognized. Men have made intensive studies of conditions in order to develop a system of industrial education, of continuation schools, and of technical schools adapted to changed conditions. But the rural aspect has been largely neglected. Yet it is obvious that we can no longer, as the Utopian Socialists tried to do, develop an institution that is everywhere and always to be the same, if we intend that institution to be of the greatest service to humanity. Nor can we, by a study of that insti-

tution alone, have adequate information in regard to the community into which it is to fit. These things we can know only by actual, painstaking investigation. And this, in brief, is the place of the social survey in education.

CHAPTER III

THE TEACHER AND THE SURVEY

IT is evident from the discussion thus far, that any effort to adjust our schools to the communities which they are to serve, must rest primarily upon an accurate knowledge of all of the factors involved; that this knowledge must be more than mere impression and belief; and that a survey of the community, in an effort to ascertain these facts, cannot be adequate if it stops with a detailed study of the school system alone. So much, in theory at least, will doubtless be granted by any careful student of the problem. But in some senses, the greater part of the task still lies before us—namely, who is to undertake the work and how is it to be done? We may, therefore, very properly pass on to a consideration of these questions.

It has already been pointed out that there is no one to whom we should be able to look with greater confidence in this connection, than to the teacher himself.¹ Two difficulties, however, confront us,—one being the question of time at the teacher's disposal, and the other being the method of procedure. In one sense these are merely different aspects of the same problem, for the matter of time required depends in no small measure upon the method used. They are not, however, altogether the same question, and for this reason they may well be treated separately.

Undoubtedly, a bald statement that the majority of

¹ See Chapter I. Especially pp. 5-6.

teachers have ample time to make a social survey, would raise at once a vast chorus of denial. Yet it is so easy to take it for granted that the teacher's time is already well filled, that it is not altogether out of place to examine the matter a little further in an effort to see just how much of truth lies in the assertion.

At the very outset, it may be well to grant that the statement as made, is subject to several limitations. In the first place, it is unquestionably true, that a young pedagog, during his first year in the field, does have his time pretty well filled up. The arrangement and preparation of his work is all upon his hands to a greater degree than it will be at any subsequent stage of his career. Questions of discipline call for more thought and care than will be required later on. No attempt is made to belittle the truth and importance of the value of study and discipline, nor is their necessity open to successful dispute. It should be noted, however, that these things are true to the same extent, only during the first year,—or at the most, during the first two years of one's teaching experience.

The teacher's time is also well occupied at times of examinations and special entertainments, such as are given, and rightly so, on such occasions as Christmas and Commencement. At such times the teacher has little opportunity or energy to devote to what may seem to be an outside interest. Here it should be noted that these are special occasions, and not the usual routine. It may also be added that many a school is lessened in efficiency by an *undue number* of these occasions for activities. Many a school would be infinitely better off were these "unusual" occasions reduced in number and were the regular routine of reports and the like given a more thorough over-hauling.

A third limitation upon the teacher's time may also

be conceded. Every teacher is expected to enter into the life of the community, and consequently social demands are not to be overlooked.

When all this is said, however, it still leaves the essence of the statement untouched. No more erroneous impression is extant in educational matter of to-day, than that the teacher is "simply rushed to death." Teachers have hidden behind this as an excuse for so long, that they have not only persuaded others that it is true, but they have come actually to believe it themselves. As a matter of actual fact, teachers have seized upon this statement as an excuse for evading the responsibility for doing any number of things that, in their hearts, they know should be done. This is particularly true of the male members of the profession, who often find ample time to engage in any number of outside activities that seem to them to be more agreeable, but who reply vigorously to any appeal for up-building of the school itself, that they lack the time. The excuse is, with men, often backed by a plea that their income is too low for them to maintain a suitable standard of living unless they engage in these outside activities. If they were but frank about the matter, they would appreciate the fact that in most instances they are getting every cent that they earn, and many of them are getting more than they are entitled to, judging by what they actually accomplish.

But the criticism is by no means applicable to men alone. The feminine members of the profession find a splendid excuse for a round of pleasures in the plea that they must "enter into the life of the community," a statement that is true enough, but like everything else, it is easily overdone.

The truth of the whole matter is, that if teachers spend anywhere near the amount of time, thought, and

energy in their chosen profession that a lawyer, or physician, or manufacturer spends in his, they might then well object to added burdens. But if so much time was spent on their work, much that now has to be forced upon them almost at the point of a knife would already have been accomplished; the teacher's income would be considerably higher; and our schools would be less an object of criticism.²

The recognition of this truth is particularly essential in the matter of the survey. The movement can scarcely be criticised on the grounds of being an "educational frill," nor on the grounds that the teacher lacks sufficient time, for there is no reason in the world why the teacher need do all of the work himself. Moreover, the whole idea is related in a most fundamental way with the working efficiency of the school and might well be done, therefore, even at a sacrifice of some other things. The surveys already undertaken of the school plants in various localities, indicate the general acceptance of this proposition.

It becomes evident, therefore, that some attention should be devoted to the matter of method. It has already been suggested that few teachers have the time or the means at their disposal for a complete survey, *if they undertake the task alone*. But there is no reason why this should be done. There are many agencies at hand, and more that can be developed, with which the teacher may cooperate. Even the first stages of the planning of the survey and the drafting of the blanks upon which the data is to be collected, need not be wholly original work, as there are a number of

² It may be urged that cause and effect have been inverted in the matter of teachers' incomes. If we are to judge by experience in other lines of human endeavor, however, it is safe to say that teachers' wages will be increased when they prove that they are earning more, and not until then.

sources from which assistance may be obtained.

Thus, the Ohio Rural Life Survey has covered a large number of counties in that State, and though particular attention was devoted to the church problem, social and economic conditions were by no means neglected. The Department of Surveys and Exhibits of the Russell Sage Foundation is always willing to lend a helping hand in matters of this kind. The United States Bureau of Education has itself published a bulletin that contains a suggestive list of questions that might well be investigated,³ including questions of population, economic conditions, social conditions, and educational and religious conditions. Two of the more recent works on rural sociology contain an admirable chapter on the rural survey, including a suggestive list of questions to be covered.⁴ The American Unitarian Association, through its Department of Social and Public Service has issued a bulletin of considerable value entitled "Knowing One's Own Community." This may be had for the asking. The College of Agriculture of the University of Wisconsin has issued a number of extremely helpful bulletins which treat of the rural survey and the wider use of the school plant. Surely no one need complain of lack of suggestive material.⁵

The second step in the making of a survey, once the schedules have been put into satisfactory shape, is to get a corps of assistants to do the field work. This may be done in one of two ways, or, if the situation be

³ Training Courses for Rural Teachers, p. 9, Bulletin No. 2, 1913.

⁴ Gillette, *Rural Sociology*, Ch. 18, and Voght, *Introduction to Rural Sociology*.

⁵ It would be useless to attempt to suggest here a detailed schedule to follow. Several of the above mentioned references contain such schedules, and often sample blanks can be secured from agencies that have made a survey. Each community must, moreover, adjust the schedules to meet its own needs.

such that it is possible, a combination of these two ways may be utilized.

The teacher, who is presumed to be the general head and director of the work, may choose a staff of five or ten careful persons, well known in the community, representative of the various interests, who can be relied upon to exercise judgment and discretion in their work. A good method of procedure is to make a list of all those in any way available, and then, with the above qualifications in mind, check over the list, eliminating those people that, for any reason, are not altogether suited to the particular work in hand. Care should be taken that no section is without a representative, if it can be avoided in any way. It is well that all classes, young and old, as well as every economic interest (such as agricultural, mercantile, professional, etc.) should be represented. Local prejudices and sectional jealousies can best be eliminated by so doing. There is also the added advantage of avoiding one-sided conclusions. The staff thus tentatively chosen may then be called together and the matter laid before them. The object desired should be explained, other surveys discussed, and the methods of attacking the present problem talked over. It is also well to raise the matter of including others, not present, in the staff. Absolute frankness is quite essential, and it is quite probable that many compromises will have to be effected.

The second method of getting the field work done is perhaps more satisfactory, at least in certain respects. In almost every locality there are a number of existing organizations of one kind or another, and sometimes the number may be as high as a dozen or even more. Where this is the case, it may be well to put the work into the hands of an organization. By so doing, an

existing piece of machinery is utilized, and a further advantage accrues from the facts that greater vitality in the organization comes from having a definite work to do; a thing oftentimes of greatest good in itself. Where this plan is followed, it is well to talk the matter over with prominent individual members of the organization first, and, after they have secured the promise of assistance from their organization, the teacher can appear before them in person, if he chance not to be a member, and proceed as already suggested. It is quite essential that, within the organization itself, responsibility be centered through some individual, in a committee. The question of which organization, if there be more than one, is chosen, must be most carefully considered by the director, as a poor selection may easily wreck the whole procedure. For reasons already suggested, it is usually well, other things being equal, to select some religious club or organization.

The last-named difficulty—that of choosing which organization shall be entrusted with the work—may be avoided by a combination of the two methods already suggested. If there be several agencies available, it is often advisable to give a portion of the work to each of them, thus avoiding jealousies, insuring representation of most (if not all) the leading interests in the community, and popularizing the work, while at the same time “half-dead” organizations are revived by having a real work to do. Where this policy is followed, it is well to have each group choose a single representative (as must of course be done in any case if efficient work is to be done) and then organize these various representatives into a single Executive Committee, of which the teacher should be the chairman.

This Executive Committee should convene frequently, and go over every detail of the work and understand

perfectly each detail on the schedules before actual field work is undertaken. In the division of the field among the various organizations, it is well that, wherever possible, no organization should examine its own particular section of the field; for although there is the possibility of prejudice where one organization surveys another, this danger can be avoided with far greater ease than the opposite one of unduly favorable returns as a result of too close acquaintanceship with one particular function.

The machinery having been selected, the next step is to collect the data.⁶ If possible, a printed or type-written copy of instructions to all collectors of data should be placed in the hands of those engaged in the work. In any event, it is well to make a number of suggestions to these people. The following list is fairly representative of the nature of these suggestions. The hints given come from actual experience in the work, and may therefore be of some value.

Keep all blanks in a notebook; separate (as with a

⁶The problem of just what constitutes the "Community" is somewhat simplified where the ultimate object is educational adjustment, since in this case the unit is the school district to which the teacher is responsible. In cases where the survey is not primarily undertaken by the school yet presumably in the interests of the school the best plan, perhaps, of defining the community boundary is that suggested by the University of Wisconsin, College of Agriculture, "Begin at the village center and go west into the open country. The first farmhouse goes to this village for trade, doctor, high school, church, etc. It therefore belongs to this community. So the second home west, the third, the fourth, etc. Finally, you come to a home that turns the other way to another village for its principal needs. This home does not belong to your community. Connect with a line all the most distant homes in each direction, that you find turning to the activities in your village center. This line will be the boundary of your community." See University of Wisconsin, Agricultural Experiment Station, Circular of Information No. 20—"A Method of Making a Social Survey" by C. J. Galpin.

rubber band) those filled out from those still to be filled out, as well as keeping various sets of blanks separate.

Do not confine your notes to the blank questions. Remember that no set of blanks can anticipate all information; hence do not neglect facts simply because there is no specific space for them. These sidelights are often the most valuable bits of information that it is possible to get, and throw an infinite amount of light upon the explanation of the other data.

At every possible point, check up the facts that have been given you. Thus, the condition of the church should not be accepted from information from the pastor alone, but should be confirmed from disinterested sources.

Do not categorically quizz in an effort to secure information if any other method can be used. By so doing you are apt to arouse antagonism and at the same time you automatically exclude the possibility of securing side-lights upon the situation.

Take plenty of time. You can never tell how much you may miss by hurrying your informer.

Take photographs of very good or very poor conditions. These confirm the data, give a measure for future improvement, and increase the interest.

Do not hand in a card or answer a question without reading it twice.

In returning cards, do not fold them—hand them in flat. It adds to the ease of dealing with them when it comes to filing.

Be sure to sign your name to every card you hand in. In no other way can data be checked up if called into question.

Do not ask any one for information necessary to fill out the cards if you can possibly obtain it by personal investigation.

Take *mental* notes of things where written answers might arouse opposition and would be observed at the time. Many people "close up like clams" if they think they are telling you something which might be used. *But make written memorandum at the earliest available moment.*

Obtain *exact* information wherever possible. Do not be satisfied with "estimates" if there are any records available. (Thus, in getting the church membership, go to the church rolls, and do not rely upon the informer's estimates, no matter how well informed he may appear to be.)

Take your notes with a fountain pen, and write legibly. Remember that you are not the only one who may want to read what you have written.

It is well, if possible, to get written copies of constitutions and the like, of any organizations with which you are dealing, whether that organization be economic, social, or religious. Do not neglect this simply because you "know where it can be found," or because "everybody knows about it." It may not be available at the very time that it is wanted most, and many a constitution contains clauses that even the members of the organization know nothing about.

There is one other thing which it may be well to mention, since it is so frequently overlooked. No end of information can be gotten from county records, from records of Justices of the Peace, from the Census returns, and from governmental agencies of other kinds. Scarcely any other source of accurate information, for instance, is available on matters of soil composition, rain-fall, and the like. Other information, of course, can be obtained from local persons, such as the pastors, leading farmers, Sunday School teachers,

assessors, presidents and secretaries of local organizations, etc. It is also well to get the opinions of numerous people who are not especially prominent, since these form the bulk of the population and their judgment is the ultimate determinant of success or failure.

The data having been collected, the next problem is what shall be done with it. For when the work in the field has been done, the blanks filled out, and the questions answered, it is certainly no time to sit down and say to ourselves, "What a fine piece of work we have done," even though the survey is more complete than the usual educational survey. For though the means have now been secured, the end still remains to be accomplished. At least three things remain to be done: (1) the tabulation of the data, (2) its presentation, in understandable form, with an analysis thereof, to the community to which it really belongs; and the securing of a discussion of the results by the community; (3) the formulation of a constructive program, with a view both toward keeping the data up-to-date, and toward remedying the community's weak spots. From our present point of view, of course, this applies particularly to the school system.

The tabulation of the data is the least difficult of these tasks, and yet even here there are several considerations to be borne in mind. It would be well to file the original cards with the data just as it is, fresh from the field. This makes it possible to have always on hand the material from which to pass upon new difficulties as they arise, and at the same time to keep the facts strictly up-to-date. The material should also be compiled in the form of summary charts. A third device is also most helpful, namely, the making of charts. Here, again, there is room for the exercise of ingenuity. A general, or community, map, drawn

on white card-board or cloth-backed paper—perhaps 36 by 40 inches—and indicating all the roads; the village limits; the location and occupiers of the out-lying farms; whether farms are owned or rented; and the location of creameries, churches, and the like. A village map of similar size should accompany this. Galpin, in the Bulletin No. 20 of the University of Wisconsin, College of Agriculture, mentioned above, suggests that these same maps may be converted into a “socialization map” by assigning to each organization (found by means of the survey) a separate color, and then attaching to each farm home shown on the maps, seals of the color representative of the organizations of which members are to be found in that home. In addition to these general maps any number of special maps may be added, as a church map, similar to those of the Ohio Rural Life Survey;⁷ a population map, indicating the nativity, sex, and age of the inhabitants, and almost any number of others.

The second part of the task is to present this data to the community in understandable form, with an analysis of it. Great effort will usually not be required to get the people together to talk over this data, for by the time the work has reached this stage every one in the community will know about it and be keenly inquisitive about the results. Merely a notice, therefore, calling attention to the fact that a general meeting is to be held for this purpose, will be quite sufficient. Two things must be accomplished at this meeting. In the first place, the facts must be presented, uncolored by personal feelings, and in such a way that the situation is made perfectly clear. Charts, diagrams, and maps should be relied upon. It is well to have this material

⁷ See, for instance, those in the bulletin Church Growth and Decay in Ohio, pp. 18-19.

on exhibition and open to examination before the meeting is called to order. Those present can then partially familiarize themselves with it before the discussion begins. Figures are always tiresome to the average audience, and care should be taken that too many statistics are not given. On the other hand, no doubt should be left in the minds of the people as to the actual existence of adequate data as a basis for the charts.⁸

The second object to be attained at this town meeting is to lay the foundation for permanent constructive work. Cooperation should be the key-note to the whole meeting. It should be made clear that the only purpose in showing weaknesses is that they may be remedied. With the data thus in hand, with a spirit of cooperation developed, and a constructive program outlined, the community may well look toward a higher plane of educational effort,—an awakened public spirit on the one hand, and on the other hand, the way cleared for a school that fits into its own locality; and by adjustment, meets its particular demands. For now, and not until now, is the teacher ready to say to those who support the school, "We are in a position to serve you."

The signs of the times are good. Earnest minded men and women in the teaching profession are trying to further efficiency scientifically. There are a number of illustrations to which attention might be called; one—that of the Georgia Club of the State Normal School at Athens, Georgia—is given below. This is perhaps the most notable example.

"For two years the club has been studying the various

* Upon the construction of these charts, two sources of information, among a large number of others, might be indicated. The publications of the Ohio Rural Life Survey are full of excellent suggestions, and the Russell Sage Foundation issues a pamphlet on the construction of Exhibits.

phases and problems of population, agriculture, manufacturing, wealth and taxation, farm ownership and tenancy, public roads, public sanitation, cooperative farm enterprise, schools and churches in Georgia. The state has been passing under searching review as a whole, and in detail county by county. Every step of the way Georgia is compared with the other States of the Union and ranked accordingly. But also her gains and losses, between 1900 and 1910, are exhibited in a 10-year balance sheet.

Meanwhile the various student groups have been working out similar balance sheets for their home counties, each county being ranked among the counties of the State in all the particulars covered in the club studies. These bare facts are then translated into simple running narratives for easy reading by the way-faring man back in the home counties. Thirty-six such county surveys have thus far been given to the public. They embody facts and well-considered conclusions. The club believes that facts without opinions are useless, and that opinions without facts are impertinent and mischievous.

And so the club is ransacking the census returns, the reports of the State house officials, the county tax digests, and grand jury presentments, the minutes of the church associations, the section on Georgia in the school library, and every other available source of authoritative information.

Most of the students are country bred and usually know their home counties thoroughly; but when they study the drift of affairs and events during a 10-year interval, and check the contrasts, they are brought face to face with causes, conditions, and consequences within small, definite, well-known areas.

The discoveries challenge interest and concern like

a bugle blast. A sense of civic and social responsibility stirs in them. They hear the call to service in the country-side, to service within the walls of their schoolrooms and far beyond it. All of these young people will be teachers, but few of them will be teachers merely, they will be leaders as well, in all worthy community enterprises."

Having carried the work thus far, there are clearly two phases of the task still before us—one dealing with the curriculum itself, and the other dealing with the relation between the school and the adult. Each of these calls for separate attention. But before taking up these, a word regarding the teacher himself will be in order.

CHAPTER IV

THE TEACHER AND THE CURRICULUM

THE second of the original propositions calls for an adapted curriculum. We must not, at any time, forget a thing that is made much of in our city schools but which is equally applicable to rural communities, and that is that the vast majority of people, at the present time, never get beyond the high school. The agricultural college will do much, but most young farmers will never get that far. In fact, this lack of education is peculiarly true of the country; for while the percentage of those who drop out is probably no larger than it is in the city, yet the terms in country schools are apt to be shorter, and having dropped out one finds that there is little equivalent for the continuation school or the apprenticeship so often open to city youth. Extension courses and correspondence courses are open to the country youth, it is true, but these can never quite fill the place of the opportunities of the urban dweller. What then, is to be done?

When the teacher, trained as has been suggested, comes to the open country, he finds confronting him two tasks; one that of the adaptation of the curriculum, and the other the socializing of the school. The former is the more immediate. It should be noted at this point that the subjects required may be roughly grouped into two classes—those which may, in a large measure, be taught much the same in any community and those in which the greatest value is to be secured through special

adjustment to local conditions. Thus, spelling, grammar, arithmetic, penmanship, and to a degree history, must be taught upon the basis of the involved principles, and the method must largely be the same whether the school is located in a mining, a grazing, or a lumbering community. With these we need not particularly concern ourselves now.

On the other hand, there are those branches, such as agriculture and government, that ought to be adapted; and they can only be made to mean the most through such adjustment. Not but what there are certain fundamental principles that must be established wherever these studies are offered, but the greatest good comes through a particular application of them to the locality involved. Moreover, while the basic principles may be the same, their effective presentation is dependent upon a thorough acquaintance with local conditions, prejudices, and temperament. The primary thing to note is that the demand is not for the offering of new courses nor the dropping of certain others. The difficulty is rather a matter of emphasis and adaptation.

To be concrete, let us illustrate the point by a brief consideration of two communities. Roughly speaking, agricultural communities may be classed as (a) stock raising, (b) fruit raising, (c) dairying, (d) general farming, (e) market gardening, and (f) communities where particular crops are raised, such as corn, grain, cotton or tobacco sections. Further classifications may be made along other considerations, but these are the most obvious.

Suppose, then, for the purpose of illustration, that we have two communities—*A* and *B*. Having undertaken a social survey and analyzed the localities, let us suppose further that, in regard to *A*, the following facts are revealed: it is a fruit growing community;

most of the farmers are of native white stock; they are conservative by temperament; they borrow little money; their average income is above that of farmers in general; they own their own farms. In the community of *B*, the number of renters is very high—due to the cost of land; the population is of foreign extraction; the farmers secure a meager income from mixed farming. There is no grange, no lodges of any kind of significance, and there is no effort toward cooperation. These facts can be established to a certainty only by investigation—surface impressions are extremely apt to be erroneous and colored by the comparatively few persons with whom the investigator comes in contact. Moreover, even though the impressions be correct, the extent to which these conditions exist can only be determined by careful analysis and study.

It might be mentioned, in passing, that the writer has in mind actual communities, in this analysis. They are essentially different in make-up, but are purposely so chosen for the sake of making the point perfectly clear.

Now, in both of these communities—*A* and *B*—the state law requires the same course of study—from which are chosen, for the purpose of making the contrast—the teaching of agriculture, of government, and of literature. These illustrate both the newer and the older tendencies in curriculum-making, and while it is obviously out of the question to outline courses in each of these branches, certain differences in presentation and emphasis may be indicated by way of comparison.

Take, for instance, the teaching of agriculture. In a recent bulletin of the bureau of Education¹ it is pointed out that Warren's "Elements of Agri-

¹ Agricultural Instruction in High Schools.

culture" is used in twice as many schools as is any other text; it is followed in importance by Goff and Mayne "First Principles of Agriculture." Assuming, for purposes of illustration, that the teacher does use one of these texts, it would be interesting to know how many simply teach them through. More and more are teachers coming to supplement agricultural texts with experimental work, and occasionally with government bulletins. But the point to which it is intended to call attention is that the only variation in emphasis which the various divisions of the field get are those already indicated by the text, and the supplemental work *is not for the sake of varying the emphasis*. There are two reasons why this is done, one being that the teacher assumes that the children will get at home the application to local conditions; the other being that he feels something of a lack of adequate preparation, and is afraid of making a mistake.

So far as the first reason is concerned, it is simply a fact that children do not learn the principles at home. Probably most farmers do what they do, without knowing why, simply because it brings some kind of results; and hence the child does not see the principle in application in such form that it is recognized. Not infrequently, too, the method pursued by the farmer is not the best by any manner of means. To cite a parallel illustration: the girl may learn something about household management at home, but the facts are without explanation; the process often cumbersome or awkward; and the results, judged from any point of view, are indifferent in quality. In any case, trained supervision and direction are essential to the securing of the best results.

So far as the second reason is concerned—the fear of making a mistake—it may be suggested that an ade-

quate training for *rural teaching* might go a long way toward establishing confidence in his own ability, on the part of the teacher. Not that he need be a technically trained farmer, but he should be sure of himself so far as he goes, and not be placed in a position where lack of preparation causes lack of efficiency.

So the fact remains, that in the two communities we have under consideration, or any other community for that matter, a policy of equal emphasis can but result in a loss of efficiency. Either by bulletins, or lecture work, or experimental and laboratory work, the teacher in community *A* should by all means emphasize the things which the farmers in that locality need to know in a scientific way,—such as the culture of small fruits, spraying and tree pests, tree diseases, tree care, frost prevention, packing for market, advertising, and subsidiary crops. Special attention should be given to showing the value of cooperative enterprises, and the value of expert advice, for experience shows that it is in just such localities as this that the self-complacent native white scorns aid or advice. These are the things, on the other hand, which the teacher in *B* may safely pass over with less attention. He has need to emphasize rotation, seed selection, weeds, buildings, stock judging, feeds and feeding, diseases of cattle, good roads, and, the community being a renting one, the need of conservation. Not but what all of these things need to be taught in both localities, but the *emphasis* needs to be placed where the local need demands. The social survey will, moreover, indicate certain particular weaknesses in this special fruit growing community—peculiarities that would probably come to one's notice in no other way. These need to be given attention and not passed over for fear of local criticism. Tact must be used, but the facts must be told.

So, too, in the case of literature. Here there is, at the present time, less leeway for the teacher, since he is expected to cover the readings required for college entrance. The difficulty here arises primarily from the fact that in the committee of the National Educational Association little weight indeed is given to the opinion of the *rural* constituency of that committee. The charge that the colleges have dictated the requirements is of course not new, and in part a concession has been forced to meet the needs of the eighty-three per cent of high school students who do not go to college. But the concessions have been made for the benefit of the technical and manual-training schools; and while *they* are being accommodated in part, the rural student is as bad off as ever. The percentage of rural students who go either to the city technical school or to colleges of liberal arts is as small, in all probability, as the percentage of urban high school students who go to college. Yet no adjustment has been made for the benefit of this large percentage of rural students. It would seem as though consideration should be given to this fact. It is beyond all question possible to acquaint the rural student with the choicest bits of the world's literature and yet, at the same time, place the emphasis upon authors who treat of rural topics. Usually we pass these things by with a reference to the beautiful figures of speech and to the fact that the scene is laid "in a simple country village." But it is difficult to see why in place of those writers who always give the urban point of view, we might not introduce more Whittier, and Longfellow, and perhaps Isaac Walton, Gray's Letters, and Thomson's "Seasons."

These things, however, have been emphasized before, and they need not be repeated again, except to say that to gain even this vantage ground is not sufficient. So

far as these particular communities are concerned is it not the part of wisdom to emphasize, in community *A*, such writings as will stir them out of their lethargy and make them question and think. In this connection Thoreau's "Walden", some of Burrows, and perhaps even parts of Rousseau may not be out of place. There are, too, many more recent writings that will serve the same purpose though they have not as yet taken their places among the world's greatest pieces of literature, and possibly never will. In *B*, on the other hand, a quieting, more satisfied tone is called for,—"The Vicar of Wakefield" and Whittier's "Snowbound," and Longfellow will not be amiss.

The same principle holds true in the teaching of government. Here the obvious function, in the case of *A*, is to develop an appreciation of the political heritage of the people, an appreciation of the influence of the native born English-speaking persons; and more may be taken for granted as to the machinery of government and the meaning of terms. In *B*, on the other hand, the function must be to develop a conception of an American's rights and duties, of the proper sphere of governmental activities (if there be any leaning toward socialism). To be somewhat more specific—in *A* the emphasis should be placed upon the influence of popular rule; of special problems rising from the shifting of population; questions of foreign policy may be considered; and the organization of the various governmental agencies may be treated in greater detail. In *B* the topics that require special study are the place of political parties and terminology; the immediate duties of citizenship; the ethics of the franchise; and the simpler facts bearing on the legal relation of owner and tenant; as well as the obligations of debtors; the place of the savings bank, and the like.

One may be pardoned for a seeming digression in this connection; but the subject is so seldom given due consideration in spite of its vital importance that particular attention may well be called to it. Other phases of education have been duly emphasized, but so far as acquainting a student with the real nature of the political institutions that we expect him to support, or insisting upon the importance of keeping abreast of current events, or suggesting the nature of the great social questions with which the State itself is being forced to cope more and more, our secondary schools do little indeed. Few of our high school graduates have any but the haziest of notions, and these full of error, regarding the political world about them; while their ideas of the economic institutions of society are scanty and warped out of all proportion through lack of proper prospective, and still fewer graduates have any conception of the larger social problems of the day.

The theory of the case is clear. One has but to give the situation a moment's thought to recognize the increasing importance of such training. Every month it is suggested that we transfer to the state some function hitherto left to private initiative. The government is constantly asked to regulate and supervise new fields of enterprise. Monopoly and competition alike are controlled by government commissions. It is neither to condemn nor defend this tendency that attention is called to it, but solely to urge that adequate performance of these functions implies previous training and thought.

The significance of the whole matter becomes more apparent when we bear in mind that the settlement of many of these questions is being forced directly back upon the people. Direct election, initiative and refer-

endum, and recall have taken the place, in a measure, of representative government. At every election people are called upon to settle political, economic, and social questions of the widest significance.

It is axiomatic that if five-sixths of our children do not complete the high school and if they are forced to settle such questions as these, some attention of more than superficial nature must be given to this phase of their education. Culture avails one nothing when anarchy prevails, and technical or industrial training is useless when hasty or unwise laws deaden industry. The conclusion, in theory at least, is inevitable—that any educational system which does not give students some conception of the social and political forces of the world about them does not fulfill its proper function.

The theory of the case is thus clear. None can deny the need of such training nor that the training should be thorough and begun early. But what are the facts? Civics is probably taught in some form or other, in practically every high school in the United States. But, with this much granted, there are two things to be borne in mind. One is that in most of the schools it is an elective. With our insane desire to fill up our high school curriculum with as many electives as possible, and a seeming desire not to force any student to take any study that he does not wish (unless, as one superintendent conceded, "it be English") a very large proportion of our students never take civics at all. English we force them to take; in most places, fortunately, we also compel students to take ancient and modern history; vocational work we rather expect to be taken; but for this great, tremendously significant responsibility which the future citizen cannot well shirk, and for the attempted avoidance of which we unspurtingly denounce him, we make little or no provision at all.

As President George Gunton has so well said, "At present, for the great army of youths who go from the public schools to the workshop, there is no mental preparation for intelligent dealing with these subjects. They are left to jostle against their fellows in the workshop, to hear and feel the causes for discontent; they read the inflammatory and sensational stuff in the newspapers, listen to more or less acrimonious discussions of social questions in their shop meetings and organizations; and all without the slightest background of educational preparation for forming rational judgments. The only natural result is that their decisions are made up from feelings and prejudices created by their economic environment."²

No wonder, then, that the politician of the lower type can dominate our political life; that public opinion is unable to settle upon any course of action and compel results; and that there are many intelligent men within our own land who urge, more or less under their breath but none the less strongly, that popular government is a failure.

No further argument should be needed to establish the necessity for a thorough and sane course in the so-called social sciences. And from what has been said heretofore it must be evident that no course dealing with these subjects can be of greatest value unless local conditions and peculiarities are kept constantly in mind.

And finally, a word in summary about the curriculum. It obviously does not serve the demands of adjustment merely to introduce rural themes and agricultural instruction in the rural schools, although these things help much. The real adjustment is between the curriculum and the particular community in question.

² National Educational Association, 1901, p. 188.

And lastly, the end of it all should be kept ever in mind—to build up a live, efficient, and socialized farmer who realizes the dignity of his calling. To this end must all branches of instruction be pointed, and each should support the other in an effort to realize its attainment.

CHAPTER V

THE PROBLEM OF THE ADULT

THE discussion up to this point has indicated the need of a social survey in every community, and has suggested the method by which this survey may be conducted. Resting upon the facts revealed by this study, a program that shall be constructive in every sense of the word may be built. Two of the principles involved in the situation have been made clear. First, the teacher must be trained adequately for his work; not only as to facts and method of teaching, but he must also appreciate the economic and sociological responsibilities of his position. In the second place, there must be a curriculum which is adapted to rural life, and which shall train men for leadership and intelligent citizenship.

We come now to the final principle—one that deals, in a sense, with the end of the whole matter. The problem of the adult is a two-fold one; it must treat on the one hand, with the man or woman who has been reared under an educational system that has produced a product worthy of the effort. It has already been suggested that the whole object of rural education is to turn out a live, efficient, and socialized farmer, and in so far as the school attains this object, that is the result. On the other hand, there is the adult who has not had any training under such an educational system, or has had it only in part. And here we meet with a much more difficult situation.

It is because the school has not always done its full duty toward those with whom it has had to deal, that it should feel some responsibility resting upon it for the success of these persons, later. This is not the place to inquire at length into the social center, and it is made the subject of discussion in this chapter merely to indicate its relation to the other factors that have been under consideration; and to point out something of the part which the teacher should play in social center movements.

The social center is extremely desirable in the city, but its rural value is many times greater, for there it supplies a need seldom met by any other agency. Partly because of the natural individualism; partly because of the greater social attractions of the city; partly because the railroad and trolley have made people believe that the urban advantages can be made to serve the country folk; partly because of religious sectarianism; and *largely* because the school teacher has not seen its needs and possibilities, country life has become anything but attractive.

The weakness, as has already been pointed out, is both an economic and a social one. Yet behind both, in a large measure, rests the failure to realize a community spirit, and for this lack the school can and should be held responsible. I say "should be", and I say this because where such a movement has been lacking, its beginning should emanate from the school. Yet, as a matter of fact, the school has failed to adapt itself either to the future demands of the child or to the present needs of the adult. The former we have considered at some length. What is the teacher's proper function so far as the latter is concerned?

In the first place let it be noted that the teacher is the natural initiator of such a movement. Non-sectar-

ian, a prominent figure, with the results of the survey in his hands, adapted by training to lead, he is (or should be) preeminently fitted for the task. Or, as Mr. C. J. Galpin has put it, "The rural school teacher is a paid leader in the neighborhood and community, usually with some surplus human interest and some surplus energy, available for the social center enterprise. This surplus energy, while often donated voluntarily to the public, may be contracted for and paid for, and so made a part of the institutional life of the school."

"The initial requirement," says Ward, "will be leadership. It will require a man and a woman. Two are enough to start with. Their qualities of leadership must consist of broad ideals, untiring energy, patience, tact, limiting their guidance only to the point where people think for themselves, yet ever keeping people alive to this point. It will require constant endeavor, they must be always 'on the job'. The two can work wonders in any isolated community." Are not these requirements exactly the ones that are called for in a teacher?

Granting leadership, "an accessible location, a building equipped for gatherings to discuss, to play, or to feast;" such as the school plant furnishes, "some organized responsible control; frequent occasions of a social nature appealing to all ages and both sexes, along the planes of fundamental human interest,—form some of the essentials of a rural social center. The sufficient justification for the social center lies in the fact that the thought, feeling, and experience of any individual is unavoidably incomplete and in the further fact that by looking into one another's eyes and entering into the life and experiences of one another through imagination and sympathy, the individual more nearly

completes himself and more nearly lives the life of the race. The rural social center is further justified by the absolute necessity of rural community acquaintance as a rational means of creating the conditions under which the reinforcing social institutions of school, club, society, municipality, church and the like, usually thrive.

... It will be seen . . . that no rural neighborhood . . . is too isolated or too poor to afford some form of social center. On the other hand, it will also be seen that no rural community is so well-to-do in its farm homes, so accessible to city diversions and culture, that it may not profit by this device for massing the acquaintance of its own resident people.”¹

To the question as precisely how to start a club, obviously no general answer can be given. One must take advantage of whatever local opportunities present themselves. “The first requisite is a social magnet. This can best be furnished by a community library, started by private contributions of books and money.” Clubs should be organized, sewing and cooking clubs, literary clubs, clubs for the young, for the old, and for the middle-aged, clubs for men, and clubs for women.²

Generally speaking, these clubs all fall into one of four classes, and eventually there should be at least one club in each class, for each community. They may be classified as “the farmers’ club proper, which consists of a mixed audience; the literary society or lyceum, usually composed of the young people of a community who have been brought together through the leadership

¹ *Rural Social Centers in Wisconsin*, by C. J. Galpin. Bulletin 234, published by the Agricultural Experiment Station of the University of Wisconsin. See p. 8.

² See article by the writer, in *Educational Review*, Oct., 1914.

of a country teacher; ladies' societies or circles, whose work is social, literary, or benevolent; and purely social organizations of young people in the country who know how to have a good time in the right way.”³

An actual illustration, chosen from many that might be cited, may serve to indicate how one successful social center movement was started. “On one occasion the County Training School Principal and the writer were speaking to an audience of parents and pupils called together on invitation of the teacher. One of the speakers discussed the value of alfalfa to the farmer and the best means of securing a crop. The other address considered means of community development and the importance of united effort. At the close of the talks one interested farmer asked ‘How may we organize a farmers’ club in this neighborhood?’ The subject was further discussed, interest was manifested, and plans were laid for a permanent organization. Committees on constitution, program, and club name were appointed and the time of the next meeting fixed. The club has since been fully organized with a good membership, and meets regularly. The people felt the need of closer fellowship and welcomed an opportunity to meet and consider questions of common interest. Thus the Sauk Prairie Farmers’ Club came to be.”⁴

In this same county, a typical one in the state of Wisconsin, “there are now in operation outside of village and city, twenty-five country clubs. The membership ranges from twenty-five or thirty members in the smaller clubs to seventy or eighty in the larger. In some no membership fee is charged while in others annual dues of from ten to twenty-five cents are paid. Meetings are held once in two weeks at the members’

³Rural Social Development. The Third Annual Report of the Wisconsin Country Life Conference. Jan., 1913.

⁴*Ibid.*

homes, in school houses, or in halls owned or used for this purpose. Three of the clubs now own buildings. In one of these oyster suppers, ice-cream socials, lectures, and dances are held, and the young people find means of social enjoyment in the neighborhood.”⁵

It should be noted that this movement is not, and should never be allowed to become “an effort from without to amuse or entertain the country people. It is not a moving picture song and dance performance. *It is a movement from within. A movement on the part of farm folks to provide right means of social enjoyment*, a movement that develops leaders and builds up communities through social, educational, and economic cooperation.”⁶

We are prone to think of efforts of this kind as having for their object mere social pleasure. Nothing could be further from the real truth, and the teacher must be careful not to allow himself to be misunderstood in this respect.

The leaders of the movement should keep in mind that a federation of social center clubs in any county is to be desired, eventually. The reasons for this, when the time becomes ripe for it, are quite obvious. All rural organizations should be invited to membership in the association, but all persons interested in rural welfare should be invited to attend the meetings and take part in the discussions.

The experience of the various clubs now existing certainly proves the value of rural organizations. It is a part of the work of a federation to assist in the organization of farmers' clubs as far as possible. The county superintendent of schools may well be secretary of such an association since he is generally in close touch

⁵ Rural Social Development. Third Annual Report of the Wisconsin Country Life Conference. Jan., 1913.

⁶ *Ibid.*

with nearly all rural organizations in the county. He knows the leaders in different clubs and communities who may be called upon to assist neighboring clubs. He may speak before these clubs and urge upon other communities the need of organized community effort. Thus the endeavor should be to make the association directly valuable to the clubs already in existence and also an instrument that will encourage other communities to organize for social improvement.

And having gotten the thing under way, the teacher should see to it that in all local enterprises of whatsoever nature the school should cooperate with the other social and economic agencies of the neighborhood. They should always work hand in hand for the good of children and adults alike, always willing to cooperate, mutually supporting, dealing with different phases of the same big problem. For all of these activities the school-house should serve as a common meeting place and as a clearing house for the community's activities. And, in the last place, all this implies that the teacher must be a social worker. Nothing could be clearer than that she can not do this unless she have a real grasp of the sociological and economic situation and a broad grasp of its significance.

So may be reached the goal toward which we started out—a teacher trained to understand both her children and her community, a curriculum adapted not only to rural conditions in general but to each one in particular, and a school center which concentrates and develops all of these forces that lead to the upbuilding of a wholesome rural life. From it will come service both to the present and to the future generations, and a service that will find its reward, financial, social, mental. Who could ask for more?

CHAPTER VI

THE TRAINING OF THE TEACHER

BUt," says the teacher, "we have heard all of this before. When I was in the Normal we were told repeatedly that we ought to know our community. What we haven't heard, but want to, is a definite concrete application of the thing." The teacher who replies thus is right, and he knows whereof he speaks. There has been a wealth of generalization, but little of specific application. Whether it be due to failure to realize the necessity for it or to unwillingness on the part of speakers and writers to make the effort required to be exact and not vague, there is no means of telling.

And yet another says, "Of course one should know something of the community, but why know all of *these* things? They are good things to know, and all of that, but I fail to see any connection between the rate of interest that farmers pay on their loans or the number of socialists in a community and the school curriculum."

And yet the relation is direct and more or less immediate. Before pointing it out, however, there are certain fundamental considerations that must be borne in mind. To these, even at the risk of repeating some things that seem commonplace, it is desired briefly to call attention. If there be any truth in the position thus far assumed, then it necessarily follows that each and every community is more or less peculiar unto itself and differs to a degree at least from all other

communities. It is because of this fact that it has been urged that the problem of adjustment must be dealt with by each locality more or less independently of all other localities. There are, on the other hand, certain fundamental principles that must be kept in mind everywhere, and that are, in their own way, quite universally true.

The weaknesses of the rural school system of the United States has been treated times without number. It becomes increasingly apparent that the time has come to state the problem constructively and affirmatively, and in view of a recognized weakness, to indicate the basic principles upon which the socialization of the rural school must rest.

The negative aspect of the work has been done. The attention of thinking men and women has been directed to the lamentable condition so general in our rural education. What is needed to-day is a constructive statement—the laying down of a program of regeneration and uplift.

The task thus stated is a large one, and cannot be fully dealt with short of a tremendous amount of experience and thought. The time has not come for a final statement even of the conditions to be met; and let us hope that it never will come. Moreover, each locality must largely deal with its own problems, and hence a general statement, universally true, can consist of little more than mere outline. The general features of this outline can be suggested.

The fundamental principles may be reduced to three: (1) a *properly* trained teacher; (2) an adaptation of the curriculum to meet the needs of the children of school age *in that particular community*; (3) an extension of the activities of the school so as to serve to an increasing extent the needs of *present day adults*.

A general word may not be amiss at this point before passing on to a more detailed consideration of the first of these ideas. It is constantly urged, and it must be confessed, with a goodly show of reason, that a realization of this ideal, good though it may be, depends upon the existence of two things which are lacking in the average community; namely, financial support and moral appreciation. It will readily be conceded that to attain its fullest measure of success there must be an adequate school plant, well equipped, and in the hands of an able teacher; and that to gain these things money must be obtained. It will be conceded with equal willingness that an increase of the teacher's salary, for example (assuming *ability* to give) rests upon an appreciation of the problem and an existence of an ideal that does not exist in very many communities *at the present time*. These two difficulties are not synonymous. No one who has kept abreast of recent studies in rural economics need be told that the farmer is not the universally wealthy man that he is often assumed to be. Doubtless, not over one-fourth of them are what is termed "well-to-do." If such be the case, then there is a limit to the funds which he can expend on salaries and equipment, however much he may desire advance along these lines. On the other hand, so far as results are concerned, no more is gained in communities where lack of appreciation causes the difficulty. There is no class of people that has gained such a reputation of being "close-fisted" as retired farmers, and too often the same epithet is applied to wealthy ones. A man will not spend money, ordinarily, for movements in which he has no interest. Obviously, then, development of interest is the first thing to be undertaken in these communities, and generally speaking, a lack at this point is more discouraging than at the other, but the need is

equally great. Beyond all question, then, these two difficulties, plus a teacher with no broader vision, constitute the great obstacle to rural development. But with these things fully appreciated, it is submitted that any live teacher who goes into a community with a realization of the rural problem; who understands the method and the place of a social survey; and who, without waiting for a universal and visible manifestation of this moral appreciation makes, in his own way, the most of such opportunities as may be at his disposal, will not need to wait a life-time to find the community back of him. And where one's moral sympathy goes, there also goes one's money. Aye, we may go further even than this. If the sympathy be developed and the school do its full share, then *even inability* to contribute may oftentimes be corrected.

One cannot measure the extent of the return from a strong community spirit. The frank facing of economic problems, a collective effort to meet them, a cooperation with outside agencies of value, may well transform a community of a low grade of income to one very appreciably higher. The writer has seen this too many times not to know that it is true. When people are shown the new ideal, and are convinced, even in little ways, of its value, the rest will follow if one but be patient. "There's a reason" for the dearth of concentrated interest.

The first of the aforementioned propositions has to do with the teacher. In many respects, it is by far the more important aspect of the problem. The personal element, however, has been dealt with so copiously by others that there is little need at this time to emphasize it further, and if those in the profession have not already been touched by the appeal, then surely it does not lie within the power of the present writer to

move them. It is desired merely to put side by side certain demands that perhaps have not always been so grouped in times past.

The need of an insistence upon a fair proportion of professional work is being recognized more and more. In self-defense, the state should insist that no man or woman be permitted to teach in any public school of the state unless he or she can produce evidence to the effect that work has been pursued in a distinctly accredited professional school for at least two years. It may be urged that this works an injustice to those who prepare themselves for the profession outside of any institution. But in reply it may be said that seldom, if ever, is such preparation as this adequate, and never is it the equivalent or work done under a competent instructor. The number who do thus prepare themselves is not large, in any case.

A confusion of thought may easily arise in this connection. There is in many of the civil service examinations of the present day, an oral as well as a written examination. The object is, to be certain that the applicant not only knows specified things, but to be sure that he has a personal fitness for the position for which he may be applying. The former fact may be discovered from the written answers on the paper; the latter never except by personal interview. Much the same thing is true of those about to go into the profession of teaching. Only in a professional institution can a practice department be organized; in no other place can personal fitness be so well judged by those who are competent to judge. The work may be done in a normal school or in a college, preferably the former; it may be done in some institution similar to the county training schools of Wisconsin; it may even be done in teacher-training courses in the high schools,

if there is no other way out of it; but it surely should be done somewhere. Unquestionably one of the very greatest causes of weakness in our rural schools, is the inadequacy of preparation and the personal incompetency of the teachers. I know of no way in which this can be remedied other than by professional training in an institution fitted for such work.

Nor is it sufficient to stop here. As the Ohio Commission has so well pointed out, no mere written examination can serve as an adequate test of pedagogical training or of teaching ability. Such examinations should by no means be abolished, but on the other hand, they are not in themselves satisfactory. An actual classroom test should be insisted upon. Many people can *tell exactly how* to do a great many things that they cannot actually do themselves, and this is particularly true of teaching. A written quiz to test knowledge and an actual classroom test to judge teaching ability —then the granting of a certificate, mean something worth while. Nothing can be more harmful either to pupil or teacher, than to send a graduate of a grade school back to a rural school to teach. The community that allows it gets just what it pays for—the poorest possible product on the market. We would never think of sending our children to fake physicians, but we are too often willing to place them for seven or eight years under a fake teacher.

Adequate supervision is, of course, implied. Whether this supervision be conducted by the principal or a state inspector is not so important, though a combination of the two is devoutly to be wished. Its importance, however, will be recognized at once, and it may be passed without further mention other than to insist that this supervision must be by one who is wholeheartedly in the rural problem, and who is able to

judge and suggest, *not of the classroom work alone*, but of the teacher's efficiency *as a social force in the community*. Here again we meet with the old difficulty of lack of appreciation and training. It is not strange that a supervisor who has never been trained to see the true relation between school and community; who trusts to his personal judgment as to existing facts; and whose interests lie in urban matters, would fail to criticize a teacher for inability or unwillingness to deal with the rural problem as a whole. So the fact remains that teachers are judged, almost entirely, upon classroom work. Now, class-room work is essential and primary, but surely not exclusive. Teachers have sometimes been forced out of localities because of actions which the community would not tolerate; but it is rare indeed, that a supervisor or a community has urged a teacher's removal for what he *did not do*. We are too apt to commend as "unusual" a teacher who does some constructive things, and to say nothing of him who does not engage in betterment work. The sole tests of efficiency are apt to be whether or not the children like the teacher, and whether or not the Superintendent thinks he knows his subject. One cannot be too harsh with the teacher if the supervisor does not do his share.

We come now to a third phase of the teacher-side of the problem, and one that is not always so clearly seen. The need of professional training was mentioned above and reference was made in that instance to training in what is technically known as the pedagogical subjects. But if the rural school is to take the place which it must ultimately assume, the training must go far beyond this. In the common school branches, mere ability to absorb certain facts, combined with an understanding of the history of education and of the psychology of teaching, *even though the teacher be able*

to get the desired facts to the children, does not mean that he attains his highest function. It is realized that this is a far-reaching statement and it is one with which many may not be willing to agree. The test of a good teacher has always been the ability of the person to maintain order and force the children to understand certain facts and processes. If these things were done well, that generally ended the matter. But I submit, that it is *this* ideal of teaching that has so narrowed and cramped the profession as to rob it of its highest meaning. Nowhere has this been more true than in the case of the rural school. Partly because he has been inadequately prepared; partly because he has had no one to give him a vision of the social significance of education; and partly because rural teaching has never been made a life work but has only been thought of as a step toward an urban position (if indeed it has been entered with any thought at all of remaining a teacher), the average rural teacher of the past has not been a true success. There can be no controverting the fact that there has been no other one cause which has had more to do with the decline of rural life, than the failure on the part of teachers to make the school a social force of import, not alone to the school children, but to the community at large.

Now, the ability to make the work what it ought to be, depends in no small measure upon the nature of the teacher's training. No teacher is prepared merely because he knows the facts which are to be presented and has had, in addition, a certain amount of so-called professional work. Two things are supremely necessary. One is, bearing in mind that no teacher ought to be granted a certificate without professional work, that when the prospective teacher enters the normal school he should have much of his *general* training

behind him. The normal school is a technical school and must be treated as such. Law students, for instance, in the best of our law schools, are not permitted to take up any study of law until a generous amount of *general* academic work has been completed. In some quarters the same degree of general preparation is being demanded for engineering students, as preparatory to distinctly technical work. In many places these particular branches of work are not allowed until the junior year of general college work has been completed. So it should be in the profession of teaching. The normal school is primarily a place to learn *how* to teach, not *what*. The situation in this connection is unfortunate. Among university teachers at large there is no other class of students held to be so unsatisfactory as normal school graduates, and the reason is not solely jealousy of the normal schools. The almost universal criticism is made that such students deal in generalities, do not think for themselves, and lack a comprehensive understanding of fundamental principles. The charge is easily overstated, but there is much truth in it. Lack of uniform preparation on the part of those entering renders the problem a difficult one for the normal schools to handle; but the plan of "scatteration" aggravates the situation. This plan constitutes the taking of ten weeks of one subject, fifteen weeks of some other, and perhaps twenty weeks of still another. It is no wonder that hard, concentrated effort does not produce satisfactory results. Another difficulty arises from insufficient knowledge of facts prior to the taking of pedagogical training. The writer has heard this answer nine times out of ten from those to whom was put the question of the value of normal school training: "One thing is to be kept in mind—one should not learn *how* to teach until one has first

learned some facts to be presented." Whether or not this charge of lacking knowledge of facts is true, it is something for our normal school teachers to think about. But, having provided in one way or another for this informational training, it should never be forgotten that the institution in question is a professional school, and it must always be regarded as such.

The second thing to be insisted upon, is that the would-be teacher, upon admission to this technical school, be required to specialize, within reasonable limits. Not alone that literature or manual-training be selected as a major, but that each person select between the common school and the high school; and between the city school and the country school. The nature of the tasks in these various schools are quite different and demand different preparations.

If we grant, then, that these things, though a little revolutionary, are necessary—as must be done upon second thought—we must, with the rural teacher in mind, ask ourselves what should be the nature of his training. Three things must he learn aside from the theory and practice of teaching and the professional aspect of history and arithmetic. (1) He needs a more or less thorough study of the principles of sociology; (2) he should be required to make a special study of rural economic and sociological problems, following such texts as Taylor's "Elements of Rural Economics" and Gillette's "Rural Sociology"; (3) he should have some training in the making of a social survey, accompanied by what may be termed laboratory work—that is, some actual field work under direction.¹

¹ "Perhaps this particular part of the work can best be done in sociological seminars, such as are conducted at the Kalamazoo (Mich.) State Normal School and by the Georgia Club of the State Normal School of Athens, Georgia. An ever-increasing number of institutions are giving courses especially for rural teachers. The work is still in its infancy, however.

The argument for such a training would seem, upon serious consideration, to be obvious. Indeed, we might well assume this to be true were it not that neither in the normal schools nor in the secondary schools is this field given anywhere near its due consideration. We persist in sending men and women, who have had no satisfactory training along lines of economic and political questions, out into the schools to train future citizens in right habits of thought upon such questions. And these teachers are, as tests have shown, lamentably ignorant of even the important current events. No wonder, when the teacher has been neither impressed nor trained in the right way, that deserving importance is not attached to this theme elsewhere.²

The result is that children do not become social in the broadest sense, leaders fitted for this task do not appear, and citizenship degenerates.

The more immediate effect, as though this were not enough, is perhaps even more unsatisfactory. It is that the teacher fails to attack the community problems which arise. Some mention has already been made of the seriousness of this situation, and more will be said later.

These things, then, should the teacher have—a thorough grasp of the subject matter of the texts or work he is called upon to teach; a working knowledge of psychology and the theory of teaching; a comprehensive and eminently practical training in the treatment of the economic and sociological questions peculiar to rural communities. One lacking in any of these must, in a greater or less degree, fail to accomplish his full mission, while there is no limit to the things one can do *with* them.

²See the writer's "School Science in the Secondary Schools." *School Review*, XXIII, 455-64.



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